

*Renee Price, Chair
Jamezetta Bedford, Vice-Chair
Amy Fowler
Sally Greene
Jean Hamilton
Earl McKee
Anna Richards*

**Orange County Board of Commissioners
Post Office Box 8181
300 West Tryon Street
Hillsborough, North Carolina, 27278**



AMENDMENT TO THE DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN ORANGE COUNTY

Sec.1. The Chair of the Board of County Commissioners declared the existence of a state of emergency in Orange County pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 166A-22 on March 13, 2020 ("Original Declaration") and revised the Original Declaration on March 25, 2020, April 23, 2020, May 6, 2020, May 21, 2020, June 10, 2020, June 26, 2020, July 9, 2020, July 17, 2020, August 18, 2020, September 4, 2020, October 2, 2020, November 13, 2020, December 1, 2020, March 19, 2021, June 21, 2021, July 23, 2021, and August 11, 2021.

Sec. 2. The undersigned, in consideration of changing circumstances related to COVID-19, previously adopted revised declarations of emergency incorporating the terms of various gubernatorial Executive Orders with some changes and exceptions deemed necessary and specific to Orange County. Due to improving COVID-19 data, trends, and metrics over recent months the undersigned, in consultation with the Orange County Health Director, determines and makes the following findings:

- a. COVID-19 Variants continue to spread throughout the nation and Orange County, however such spread is decreasing substantially; and
- b. COVID-19 related deaths and hospitalizations are decreasing both nationwide and in Orange County; and
- c. As of February 28, 2022 there were 1,618 hospitalized COVID-19 patients in North Carolina, of whom 324 adults were occupying ICU beds; and
- d. As of February 28, 2022 there were 277 adults hospitalized COVID-19 patients in the Mid Carolina Regional Healthcare Coalition, of which Orange County is a member, and of those 309 hospitalized patients 52 were occupying ICU beds; and
- e. As of February 28, 2022 Orange County specific metrics include a 5.5% COVID-19 positive test rate, and Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") Community Level Metrics of 177.8 cases per 100,000 people in the last seven days, 16.84 new hospitalizations per 100,000 people in the last seven days, and 12.5% of staffed inpatient hospital beds occupied by COVID-19 patients; and
- f. Vaccinations and boosters remain the most effective tools to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and its variants; and

- g. As of February 28, 2022 vaccination rates in Orange County are at the highest level in the state with approximately 76% of the population fully vaccinated, and 78% of the population having received at least one dose of vaccine; and
- h. Although masking is beneficial in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and its variants, on February 17, 2022 Governor Roy Cooper, in consultation with Health and Human Services Secretary Kody Kinsley, encouraged “schools and local governments to end their mask mandates;” and
- i. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (“NCDHHS”) has, pursuant to current trends and metrics, issued the following guidance related to Face Coverings, “North Carolina’s COVID-19 metrics are moving in the right direction. If trends continue to improve, NCDHHS recommends schools and local governments consider moving to voluntary masking beginning March 7, 2022. Because well-fitting masks provide extra protection, you may still choose to wear one. Businesses should make the best decisions for their employees and customers. Please be respectful of others who choose to wear a mask. Masks are still required in places like health care, long-term care and public transportation like airplanes. This is because of the setting or federal regulations;” and
- j. By both the CDC and NCDHHS metrics Orange County has a moderate COVID-19 Community Level.

Sec. 3. In consideration of all available data, trends, and metrics related to the impacts of COVID-19 in Orange County, and particularly the Orange County-specific metrics, the undersigned, in consultation with the Orange County Health Director, hereby determines it is in the best interest of the residents of Orange County to leave in place the declaration of emergency. Pursuant to factors set out above, the available data, trends, and metrics related to the impacts of COVID-19 in Orange County, guidance from both the CDC and NCDHHS, and the recommendation of the Orange County Health Director, the Orange County Declaration of Emergency related to COVID-19 is hereby amended as follows:

- a. The State of Emergency in Orange County is amended as stated herein and continues until such time as it is rescinded or terminated by the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners; and
- b. Save and except for Section 3 of the August 11, 2021 Amendment to the Orange County Declaration of Emergency, which remains in effect, and the terms and changes implemented in this Amendment, all prior Orange County specific requirements and terms of the Original Declaration as amended are repealed; and
- c. In addition to the current terms of the COVID-19 related gubernatorial declaration of emergency, the following shall apply throughout Orange County;
 - i. It is recommended that all residents of Orange County wear Face Coverings in indoor settings in Orange County. “Face Covering” means a complete covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears and fits snugly against the side of a person’s face. A Face Covering may be

made of synthetic or natural material. Face Coverings may be required pursuant to state or federal rules or law for anyone who

- (a) lives or works in high-risk settings such as in hospitals, nursing homes, and some other health care facilities, which state and federal rules or laws shall be followed and enforced,
 - (b) uses public transportation which state and federal rules or laws shall be followed and enforced.
- ii. Face Coverings for Orange County employees and visitors may continue to be required in certain Orange County owned, leased, or operated buildings or rooms of buildings. If effective, notice of this requirement shall be prominently posted and displayed at all publicly accessible entrances to such buildings or rooms of buildings.
- iii. Social/physical distancing is recommended in public indoor settings.
- iv. Social/physical distancing may be required in certain Orange County owned, leased, or operated buildings or rooms of buildings. If effective, notice shall be provided to employees of and visitors to such buildings or rooms of buildings.
- v. Should COVID-19 data, metrics, or trends in Orange County worsen, social/physical distancing requirements and Face Covering requirements may be re-adopted.

Sec. 4. This Amendment is adopted pursuant to the authority granted by Chapter 14 of the Orange County Code of General Ordinances and Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes. A copy of this Amendment shall be provided to the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners. Reports of the substance of its prohibitions and restrictions shall be sent immediately to the mass communications media serving Orange County. As soon as practicable, the full text of this Amendment shall be distributed to the mass communications media serving Orange County. A copy of this Amendment shall be posted conspicuously on the Orange County website at www.orangecountync.gov. Notice and a signed copy of this Amendment to the Declaration of a State of Emergency in Orange County shall be submitted to the Department of Public Safety WebEOC.

Sec. 5. This Amendment is effective at 5:00 pm on March 7, 2022.



Renee Price, Chair
Orange County Board of Commissioners

March 1, 2022

Date